Molecular condom may be commercialized under Utah-India deal

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Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman's ongoing trade delegation to India will initiate a long-term international collaboration with that country and the University of Utah.

During the trade mission, Jack Brittain, vice president of technology venture development at the University of Utah will sign four memorandums of understanding between the University of Utah and four reputable Indian companies: Globerian, Global Health Private Ltd. MediCity, Manipal AcuNova Ltd., and Pregna International. Gov. Huntsman will witness each of the signings to take place in Mumbai and New Delhi, India.

The dynamic partnership between the University of Utah and Pregna International, a world leader in contraceptive manufacturing located in Mumbai, India, will focus on the commercialization of cutting edge anti-HIV and contraceptive delivery products for the Indian marketplace.

"There are over two-million individuals living with HIV/AIDS in India today with 84 percent of the infections resulting from sexual transmission of the virus," says Patrick Kiser, an assistant professor of bioengineering at the University of Utah. "The University's portfolio of innovative technologies coupled with the product development experience of Pregna could help the control of the spread of this devastating disease. This partnership will give the University a chance to place their technologies in the hands of people that need them most and will enhance the value of our technologies in the developed world."

One of the technologies that may be commercialized through a partnership with Pregna is a molecular condom that protects against AIDS. This technology was developed by Kavita Madanlal Gupta and Kiser. Gupta is an international student from India and is currently working toward a Ph.D. in bioengineering at the University of Utah.

Microbicides, such as the microbicidal molecular condom developed by Gupta, are seen as a way for women to gain power by protecting themselves from HIV. Together, Pregna, and the University, will work on this and a variety of other technologies which have the potential to provide humanitarian aid to the people of India. For more information about molecular condom research see: www.physorg.com/news85113047.html

The university will work with each of the four companies to create a progressive alliance to accelerate commercialization of university-invented technologies, expand educational and research opportunities, as well as aid in humanitarian efforts.

“The University of Utah is continually contributing to the strength of Utah’s economy through the commercialization of their cutting-edge research and technologies,” said Governor Huntsman. “As the home of Nobel Prize winner Mario Capecchi, the University of Utah has been appropriately recognized as an international leader in research. Working collaboratively with India through these four international partnerships, the University of Utah will open up opportunities for existing businesses and aid in the start-up of new companies which will create meaningful jobs through a strong humanitarian focus.”

Globerian, headquartered in New Delhi, India, is a world leader in health information technology, research and healthcare practice management. Globerian’s resources will help medical and bioinformatics researchers and students at the University of Utah identify emerging opportunities

for the development and commercialization of the U's medical informatics expertise. Future collaborative efforts may include advancing health information research and data management technologies to provide individuals and institutions global access to health information.

Manipal AcuNova Ltd., a global clinical research organization based in Bangalore, India, will help university researchers more efficiently conduct clinical trials in India, accelerate collaborative medical technology commercialization, and offer students a practical experience in an international business-research setting.

Global Health Private Ltd., MediCity, is currently developing a four-million-square-foot, 40-acre facility in Gurgaon, India. This institution, backed by clinical and biotechnology research, will provide medical care to the growing middle class in India. This partnership will facilitate collaborative efforts to enhance healthcare delivery while providing international experience for students.

"These Indian companies are unique partners for the University of Utah," Brittain says. "Their leaders are innovative and eager to bring new medical technologies to their community. Partnering with Indian companies will allow the University to benefit from their expertise and willingness to engage in collaborative research and development. Through this alliance we will be able to accelerate commercialization of University technologies and provide economic benefits to both the United States and India."

Source: University of Utah